

Listing of the Claims:

C 1. (Currently Amended) A reagent for performing an agglutination assay for determining ~~the amount of~~ an analyte in a sample, said reagent comprising a mixture of microparticles, said mixture comprising first microparticles having a mean diameter from 30 to 600 nm and a refractive index, wherein said first microparticles are ~~selected from the group consisting of inorganic, organic and polymer materials suitable for microparticle enhanced light scattering assays and~~ are coated with a first binding partner for said analyte, and second microparticles having a mean diameter from 30 to 600 nm and a refractive index, wherein said second microparticles are ~~selected from the group consisting of inorganic, organic and polymer materials suitable for microparticle enhanced light scattering assays and~~ are coated with a second binding partner for said analyte, said first microparticles having stronger light scattering properties than said second microparticles, and said first binding partner ~~coated upon said first microparticles~~ having a higher reactivity for said analyte than said second binding partner ~~coated upon said second microparticles~~, said microparticles being capable of causing light scattering at wavelengths suitable for the detection of agglutinated microparticles between 300 and 1200 nm.

2. (Original) The reagent of claim 1, wherein said mean diameter of said first microparticles is greater than said mean diameter of said second microparticles.

3. (Original) The reagent of claim 2, wherein said refractive index of said first microparticles is greater than said refractive index of said second microparticles.

4. (Original) The reagent of claim 3, wherein a ratio of the mean diameter of said first microparticles to the mean diameter of said second microparticles ranges from about 1.5 to about 4.0.

5. (Canceled)

6. (Currently Amended) The reagent of claim 3¹, wherein ~~a ratio of the concentration of~~ said first microparticles and ~~the concentration of~~ said second microparticles have a concentration ratio in said mixture ranges of from about 0.01 to about 5.0.

7.-8. (Canceled)

9. (Original) The reagent of claim 1, wherein said analyte is a nucleic acid and said first and second binding partners are oligonucleotide capture probes.

10.(Currently Amended) The reagent of claim 1, wherein said analyte is antigenic and said first and second binding partners are ~~immunological binding partners~~ monoclonal antibodies or fragments thereof.

11.-19. (Canceled)

20.(Currently Amended) The reagent of claim 1, wherein ~~the composition of~~ said first and second microparticles have a composition ~~is~~ have a composition selected from the group consisting of selenium, carbon, gold, a nitride of carbon, a nitride of silicium, a nitride of germanium, an oxide of iron, an oxide of titanium, an oxide of silicium, an epoxy resin, polyvinyl chloride, polyvinylidene chloride, polyalpha-naphthylmethacrylate, polvinyl naphthalene, polystyrene and a copolymer thereof.

21. (Canceled)

22.(New) The reagent of claim 1, wherein the analyte is C-reactive protein and the first and second binding partners recognize different epitopes of C-reactive protein.

23.(New) The reagent of claim 1, wherein the analyte is prostate specific antigen and the first and second binding partners recognize different epitopes of prostate specific antigen.
